



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/657,520	09/08/2003	James W. Strausbaugh	706456US1	9184
24938 7590 01/23/2008 DAIMLERCHRYSLER INTELLECTUAL CAPITAL CORPORATION CIMS 483-02-19 800 CHRYSLER DR EAST AUBURN HILLS, MI 48326-2757			EXAMINER NGUYEN, CAO H	
			ART UNIT 2173	PAPER NUMBER
			MAIL DATE 01/23/2008	DELIVERY MODE. PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

27

Office Action Summary	Application No. 10/657,520	Applicant(s) STRAUSBAUGH ET AL.	
	Examiner Cao (Kevin) Nguyen	Art Unit 2173	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 27 August 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,8-12 and 14-19 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1,3-6,8-12 and 14-19 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
 Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
 Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Request for Continued Examination

This Office action is responsive to the Request for Continued Examination (RCE) filed under 37 CFR §1.53(d) for the instant application on 08/22/2007. Applicants have properly set forth the RCE, which has been entered into the application, and an examination on the merits follows herewith.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

Claims 1, 3-6, 8-12 and 14-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as anticipated by Tuli (US Patent No. 6,256,651) or, in the alternative, under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as obvious over Ramachandra et al. (US Patent No. 6,993,712).

Regarding claim 1, Tuli discloses a first level of visually represented information comprising steps necessary to complete an objective (col. 1, lines 1-8 especially "To-do" col. 1 lines 20-40 or "synchronization of a project or assignment" col. 2, lines 4-15 or Figures 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure; It would have been clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the objective (projects/assignments) are divided into steps (tasks) necessary for completion of the objective (projects/assignments)); a second level of visually represented information comprising interrelationships between work positions, wherein each of said work positions correspond to one or more workers that work on one or more of said steps (col. 1-8 especially "tasks divided between multiple secondary users" col. 2, lines 4-15 or Figures 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure; It would have been clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that interrelationships between work positions are defined by the division of steps (tasks) among work positions/workers (users/employees)); a third level of visually represented information comprising tasks each work position must accomplish for said one or more of said steps (col. 1-8 especially "tasks divided between multiple secondary users...actual workflow line which connects tasks which are contingent upon one another" col. 2, lines 4-15 or "Tasks which are 'discontinuous', are divided into various segments of time, and spread over the days" or "tasks divided between multiple secondary users" col. 2, lines 4-15 or Figures 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure; It would have been clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that steps (tasks) are divided into tasks (segments/tasks divided) for each work positions/workers (users/employees)); wherein the first, second, and third levels are organized such that the second level is accessible from the first level and the third level

is accessible from the second level (col. 1-8 especially Figures 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure. It would have been clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that the GUI depicted in the figures visually represents all three levels such that they are all accessible from each other. Examiner interprets the term "accessible" in the claimed context to mean that it is possible for the primary user to reasonably get from viewing the first layer to viewing the second layer to viewing the third level). However, Tuli fails to explicitly teach wherein each of work positions are represented by at least one icon corresponds to one or more workers within one of a plurality of groups within an organization that work one or more of said steps.

Ramachandran discloses wherein each of work positions are represented by at least one icon corresponds to one or more workers within one of a plurality of groups within an organization that work one or more of said steps (see col. 5, lines 15-36). It would have been obvious to one of an ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Tuli and Ramachandran before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the time management workflow of Tuli to include the system for facilitating user interaction in a browser environment, as taught by Ramachandran. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to provide a high level of user interaction for management organization workflow tool.

Regarding claim 3, Tuli discloses wherein the third level of visually represented information further comprises visually represented sub- steps within the steps that each of said work positions is responsible for completing (col.1-8 especially =tasks divided between multiple secondary users ... actual workflow line which connects tasks which are contingent upon one another" col. 2, lines 4-15 or =Tasks which are 'discontinuous', are divided into various segments

of time, and spread over the days" or "tasks divided between multiple secondary users" col. 2, lines 4-15 or Figures 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure; It would have been clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that steps (tasks) are divided into sub-steps (segments/tasks divided) for which each work positions/workers (users/employees) is responsible).

Regarding claim 4, Ramachandran discloses further comprising a fourth level of visually represented information comprising a work product and a destination for the work product for each sub-step (see col. 5, lines 38-60).

Regarding claim 5, Ramachandran discloses further comprising a data store having a plurality of documents therein, the data store accessible from the fourth level of visually represented information (see figure 2A).

Regarding claim 6, Ramachandran discloses wherein the fourth level of visually represented information further comprises interactions of said work positions (see figure 2B). Claim 8, differs from claim 1 in that "a second level of externally accessible information for each of said major tasks that identifies departments of the organization that must perform at least one sub- task to complete each of said major tasks by highlighting icons that correspond to said departments as recites on Ramachandran (see col. 10, lines 10-14); a third level of externally accessible information for each of said departments that identifies each individual job within said departments that must perform said at least one sub-task to complete the major task as recites on Ramachandran (see col. 9, lines 37-54); a fourth level of externally accessible information for each of said individual jobs comprising a plurality of specific sub-tasks comprising said at least one sub-task needed to complete the major task; and wherein any one of said first through fourth

levels are viewed via windows that may be accessed from a preceding or a succeeding level (see Ramachandran figure 2C). It would have been obvious to one of an ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Tuli and Ramachandran before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the time management workflow of Tuli to include the system for facilitating user interaction in a browser environment, as taught by Ramachandran. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to provide a high level of user interaction for management organization workflow tool.

Regarding claim 9, Ramachandran discloses further comprising a fifth level of externally accessible information for each of said plurality of specific sub-tasks defining at least one required work product (see figure 2D).

Regarding claims 10 and 11, Ramachandran discloses further comprising a sixth level of externally accessible information having a plurality of documents for each of said fifth levels (see col. 16, lines 1-59).

Regarding claim 12, Tuli discloses a map window having a plurality of major tasks organized on a timeline that define how to accomplish the objective, each major task identifying specific jobs that have at least one sub-task necessary to complete one of the plurality of major tasks (col.1-8 especially "To-do" col. 1, lines 20-40 or "synchronization of a project or assignment" col. 2, lines 4-15 or "tasks divided between multiple secondary users" col. 2, lines 4-15 or "Tasks which are 'discontinuous', are divided into various segments of time, and spread over the days" or "user is presented with a timetable of when to begin and when to finish all tasks" col. 2, lines 12-30 or Figures 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure; it would have been clear to the person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made that

the objective (projects/assignments) are divided into a plurality of major tasks (tasks) necessary for completion of the objective (projects/assignments), each major task being divided into sub-tasks (segments/tasks divided) for each job (user/employee), the time in the map window being clear in the bottom half of at least one of Figures 5a-5d); a task window for each job identified by the map window, the task window including at least one of said sub-tasks organized on the timeline, that is needed to complete said one of the plurality of major tasks (C1-8 especially "tasks divided between multiple secondary users" col. 2, lines 4-15 or 5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure); and wherein the task windows are accessible by selecting one of the plurality of major tasks from the map window (c1;8 especially Figures 2a-2b,3-3a,5a-5d and the related discussion in the disclosure; Examiner interprets the term "accessible" in the claimed context to mean that it is possible for the primary user to reasonably get from viewing the map window information to viewing the information task windows. These windows are on the same screen). However, Tuli fails to explicitly teach wherein each of the plurality of major tasks includes a plurality of icons that represent groups within the organization, wherein members of said plurality of icons are highlighted when respective groups have incomplete tasks.

Ramchandran discloses wherein each of the plurality of major tasks includes a plurality of icons that represent groups within the organization, wherein members of said plurality of icons are highlighted when respective groups have incomplete tasks (see col. 10, lines 4-33). It would have been obvious to one of an ordinary skill in the art, having the teachings of Tuli and Ramachandran before him at the time the invention was made, to modify the time management workflow of Tuli to include the system for facilitating user interaction in a browser environment,

as taught by Ramachandran. One would have been motivated to make such a combination in order to provide a high level of user interaction for management organization workflow tool.

Regarding claim 14, Ramachandran discloses wherein for each of the plurality of major tasks at least one of the plurality of icons are selectable by a user that represents specific individual jobs or departments that have at least one task to perform to complete one of the plurality of major tasks (see figure 2A).

Regarding claim 15, Ramachandran discloses wherein selecting a highlighted icon leads to the task window if the icon represents at least one of said sub-tasks and leads to a second plurality of selectable icons if the icon represents the at least one department (see figure 2B).

Regarding claim 16, Ramachandran discloses wherein the second plurality of icons represent specific jobs, and a selectable icon represents a specific job having at least one task to perform relating to said one of the plurality of major tasks (see figure 2C).

Regarding claim 17, Ramachandran discloses wherein each sub-task in the task window includes a list that defines how to accomplish each sub-task (see figure 2D).

Regarding claim 18, Ramachandran discloses wherein each sub-task includes a link to one of a plurality of interdependency charts (see col. 14, lines 43-54).

Regarding claim 19, Ramachandran discloses wherein each of said plurality of interdependency charts includes a link to a plurality of documents, the plurality of documents accessible by more than one of said plurality of interdependency charts (see col. 15, lines 21-45).

Conclusion

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure (see PTO-892).


Application/Control Number:
10/657,520
Art Unit: 2173

Page 9

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Cao (Kevin) Nguyen whose telephone number is (571)272-4053. The examiner can normally be reached on 8:30AM-5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Stephen Hong can be reached on (571)272-4124. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Cao (Kevin) Nguyen
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 2173

1/20/08